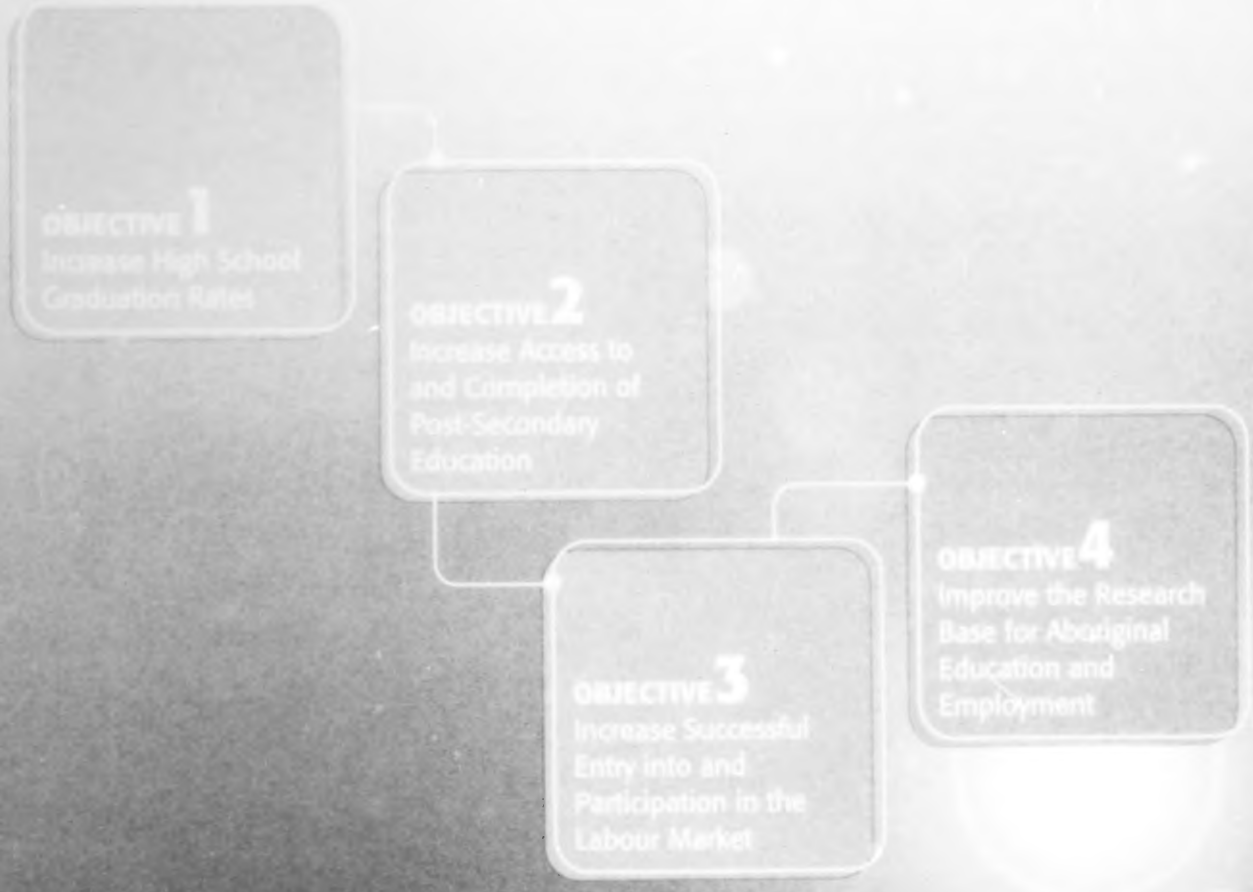
ABORIGINAL EDUCATION ACTION PLAN

2004-2007


OBJECTIVE 1
Increase High School Graduation Rates
OBJECTIVE 2
Increase Access to and Completion of Post-Secondary Education
OBJECTIVE 3
Increase Successful Entry into and Participation in the Labour Market
OBJECTIVE 4
Improve the Research Base for Aboriginal Education and Employment

Manitoba

OBJECTIVE 1: Increase High School Graduation Rates

Action 1- Improve the System

- Strengthen expected outcomes of the Aboriginal Academic Achievement categorical grant to school divisions.
- Set Aboriginal graduation rate targets within the Planning in Education initiative.
- Incorporate "Aboriginal Perspectives: A Theme-Based Curricular Approach" by:
  - delivering divisional workshops to teachers
  - including parents and community members, eg., Elders in the development of local Aboriginal perspectives.
- Ensure significant participation of Aboriginal students in the Technical-Vocational Education Initiative.
- Finalize the Memorandum of Understanding for the "Making Education Work" demonstration research project funded by Canada Millennium Scholarship Fund. Apply research results arising from this project to determine more successful community-school interventions.
- Work with the Faculties of Education to implement a required pre-service course on Aboriginal perspectives for teachers in training.
- Establish a Council of Aboriginal Educators to advise the Deputy Minister on policy development.
- Procedures will be put into place for sharing new knowledge with Manitoba literacy practitioners.

While graduation rates are improving, significant retention and completion issues characterize Aboriginal learners. Provincial efforts to increase graduation rates need to be more focused and more effort needs to be made to link initiatives with Manitoba First Nation schools.

Action 2 - Increase Parent and Community Involvement

- Develop no less than 20 demonstration projects across the province that engage Aboriginal parents/families in the educational life of their children.
- Develop workshops and materials for school personnel to increase engagement with Aboriginal parents and families of students.
- Initiate programs to bring Elders, Aboriginal community workers and other resource personnel into the school to support learning outcomes.
- Establish at least six bridging programs linking parents and the school through key Aboriginal community members.
- Promote best practices among schools that link students/families to broader community services.
- Develop promotional materials to encourage family involvement in education.
- Work with First Nations school authorities, Métis and urban Aboriginal organizations to share best practices for parental and family involvement.
- Work with Manitoba Justice to expand the range of activities/options for targeted Lighthouse schools.

Parental and community involvement supports and enhances successful learning outcomes. Key year transition strategies will increase high school graduation rates.

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Action 3 - Increase the Number of Aboriginal Teachers

- Develop a community-based Bachelor of Education program in the Winnipeg area whereby Aboriginal persons are trained and hired by school divisions as educational assistants and can complete the Bachelor of Education through summer and weekend coursework.
- Develop a community-based Bachelor of Education program in northern Manitoba through the University College of the North (UCN).
- Increase access to Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) services throughout the North including portfolio development for adult learners pursuing post-secondary teacher education careers.
- Work with school divisions to increase opportunities for Aboriginal high school students to explore teaching career "glimpses" through mentoring of younger students, SIP credits, etc.

It has been recognized for decades that having Aboriginal teachers in the classroom represents the first line of change in the education of Aboriginal children and youth.

OBJECTIVE 2: Increase Access to and Completion of Post-Secondary Education

- Establish the University College of the North including community-based training in key campus communities, rotating courses, distance education and the development of relevant northern and Aboriginal programming needs.
- Complete the review of all ACCESS programs for best practice and improved outcomes.
- Open the Selkirk office housing the Aboriginal Education Directorate, representatives from Manitoba Student Aid, Partners for Careers, and Employment and Training Services staff.
- Ensure that the coordinated services delivered through the Selkirk office offer a career development platform for inner city residents.
- Develop Aboriginal perspectives in career education programming.
- Increase financial support for Aboriginal students through the partnership initiative Aboriginal Education Awards, the HOPE bursaries, Helen Betty Osborne bursary, and partnerships with the Winnipeg Foundation.
- With funding from the Canada Millennium Scholarship Fund, participate in long-term research projects aimed at increasing post-secondary education participation rates for Aboriginal students.
- Through partnership, increase participation of First Nations education authorities in the Adult Learning Centre Network (Peguis ALC is the first to be registered).
- Through college partnerships, encourage the development of quality training and course delivery by Aboriginal instructors.
- Establish "stand alone" Aboriginal adult learning centres.

Participation in post-secondary education often means not only new opportunities for jobs and a better economic standard, but also a transformation of goals and aspirations for the next generation in the family.

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OBJECTIVE 3:

- Continue implementation of the Hydro Northern Training Strategy.
- Link Hydro training sites/communities as part of the distributed northern Adult Learning Network to be absorbed by University College of the North (UCN).
- Target an increase of Aboriginal apprentices in the new Aboriginal Apprentice Program.
- Review criteria for Senior Years Apprenticeship Option to increase Aboriginal participation. Set five year targets for increased participation.
- Increase linkages with Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement (AHRDA) holders to facilitate coordination and collaboration.
- Report on impacts and outcomes of Aboriginal Liaison Officers hired by funded sector groups.

OBJECTIVE 4:

- Establish baseline information on number and location of Aboriginal teachers and teachers-in-training.
- Establish baseline information on Aboriginal student success in education and training programs, with emphasis on ACCESS education programs
- Increase partnerships with universities and research organizations to conduct and disseminate research on Aboriginal education, especially as it pertains to learner success.
- Sponsor an annual research forum on Aboriginal education issues.
- Require school divisions to include Aboriginal specific data, e.g., graduation rates, in their annual school outcomes report.

OBJECTIVE 3: Increase Successful Entry into and Participation in the Labour Market

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Aboriginal Canadians will constitute an increasing proportion of the regional labour force over the coming years and, given that many indicators forecast an upcoming labour shortage in western Canada, ensuring that Aboriginal Canadians possess the educational training and skills necessary to compete successfully in the labour force is one of western Canada's most important challenges.

OBJECTIVE 4: Improve the Research Base for Aboriginal Education and Employment

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Inadequate information hampers the departments' efforts to establish progress indicators, determine appropriate funding enhancements and direct research activities.